

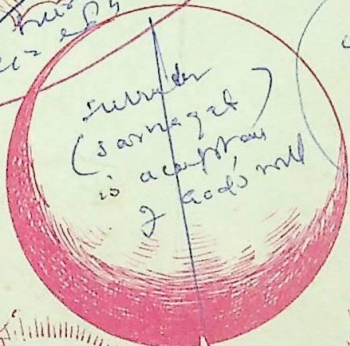
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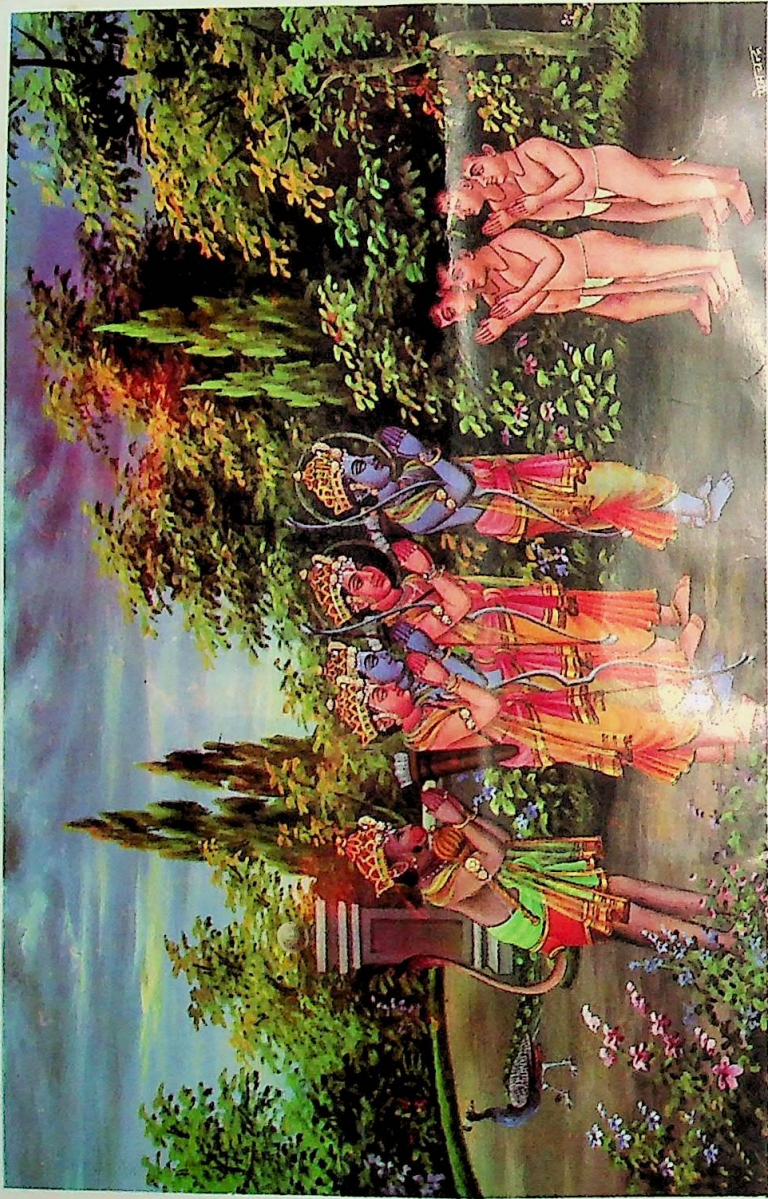
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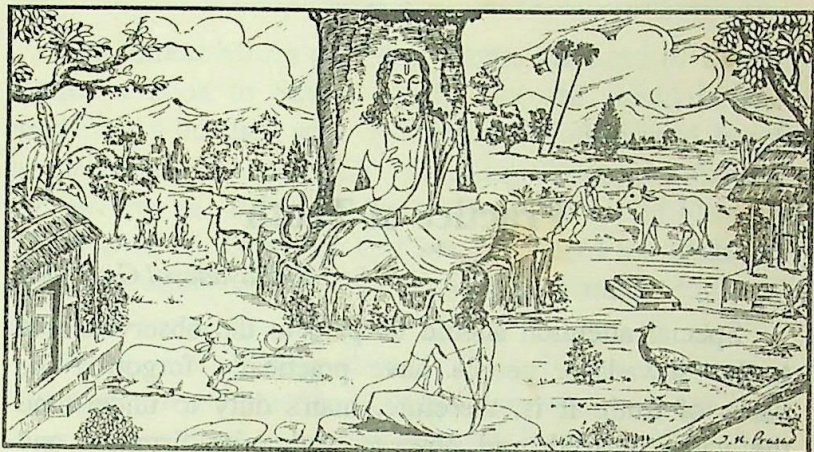


J. N. Prasad



The eternal sages in the court of Rāma

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते । पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥



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जानि समय सनकादिक आए । तेज पुंज गुन सील सुहाए ॥
ब्रह्मानंद सदा लयलीना । देखत बालक बहुकालीना ॥

"Finding it a good opportunity the sage Sanaka and his three brothers arrived there. They were all embodiments of spiritual glow, adorned with amiability and othere noble qualities and constantly absorbed in the ecstasy of union with Brahma, though infants to all appearance, they were aeons old."

(Mānasa VII. 31.2)



Practice of Truth

—Late Sri Jayadayal Goyandka

Special attention should be paid to the observance of truth. Nowadays, people have practically forgotten the value of truth. It is, therefore, man's duty to understand the value of truth and observe truth with firmness and determination *Maharṣi Patañjali* says—

सत्यप्रतिष्ठायां क्रियाफलाश्रयत्वम्।

—*Yoga Sūtra* (II. 36)

The purport of this is that when truth is established in the life of an individual, whatever statement he makes comes to pass. That is to say, if a man, who never utters a lie, pronounces either a curse or a benediction, it produces its effect. Instances of this are found in plenty in the books of *Śruti*, *Smṛti*, *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa*.

The *Bṛhadāranyakopaniṣad* describes the story of Śākalya, son of Śākala, who put several stray questions to Yājñavalkya. When he had completed his questions, Yājñavalkya, addressing him, said, "Now, I shall ask you one question; if you fail to answer it, your head will sever from your body." Śākalya failed to answer the question, hence his head actually fell off from his body (III. 9-26).

The *Śrīmadbhāgavata* states that on one occasion king Parīkṣit put a dead snake on the neck of a Ṛṣi, Śamīka by name. Enraged at this, Śṛṅgī, the son of the Ṛṣi, pronounced this curse—"Let the snake Takṣaka bite the king on the seventh day from this." That curse of the young Ṛṣi proved absolutely true (*Skandha* I, Chap. 18).

The *Mahābhārata* says that Yama, the Lord of Death, uttered a boon to Sāvitrī saying that she would be the mother of a hundred sons. According to this, Sāvitrī begot hundred sons (*Vanaparva* Ch. 297). King Śāntanu pronounced the blessing on his son Bhīṣma that Death would have no power over the latter and that his life would terminate on earth according to his own wish. This actually came to pass (*Ādiparva* Ch. 102).

Many similar illustrations appear in the scriptures. Therefore, in the practice of truth, man should always take a very determined stand. But the truth itself should be free from hypocrisy and violence; for that alone is truth in the real sense of the term.

In the *Mahābhārata*, *Droṇa Parva*, Chapter 190, it is stated that Ācārya Droṇa had once asked King Yudhiṣṭhira whether his son Aśwatthāmā had been killed or not. In reply to this Yudhiṣṭhira said that Aśwatthāmā had been killed, but it was the name of an elephant. In this sentence, he uttered the last clause, "It was the name of an elephant," inaudibly. On account of this blemish, the same utterance of even king Yudhiṣṭhira, who was universally respected as a staunch votary of truth, has been regarded as a lapse from truth.

Similarly, *Mahābhārata*, *Kaṇva Parva*, Chapter 69, records a story that once upon a time some people had run away from a body of robbers and out of fright had taken refuge in a forest. On the way to that forest lived a sage, who was a votary of truth. Closely following those people came the body of robbers, who having lost trace of their victims asked the sage as to which direction they had fled. The truthful sage spoke the truth and pointed out the dense forest where the people had hidden themselves. The result was that they were rounded up and killed. The sin of all this murder fell to the lot of the sage.

That is why a statement which does not involve either hypocrisy or violence is truth in the real sense of the term, and it is this truth alone whose glory has been sung in the scriptures.

Thus far we have dealt only with the utterance of truth. Observance of truth in conduct and thought is even more important; for truthful conduct and thought lead to God-realization. Good actions like sacrifice, charity and penance, good thoughts as well as actions performed for the sake of God are called 'Sat', inasmuch as they lead to the realization of God, the embodiment of 'Sat'. The Lord says in the *Gītā*—

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।
 प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥
 यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।
 कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥

(XVII. 26-27)

"The Divine Name 'Sat' is employed in the sense of truth and goodness; even so, Arjuna, the term (*Sat*) is used in the sense of a praiseworthy act. Steadfastness in sacrifice, penance and gift is also designated as 'Sat'; and verily action for the sake of Him (the Supreme Being) is termed as 'Sat'.

Not only that, Truth is, in fact, God Himself. That is why the term 'Sat' is a name of God. The Lord says—

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।

ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च बिहिताः पुरा ॥

(*Gītā* XVII. 23)

"*Om, Tat, Sat*—this is declared to be the threefold designation of the Absolute. At the beginning of creation, the Brahmins and the *Vedas* were created by it."

The *Śruti* also says—

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ।

(*Taitt.* II.1.1)

"*Brahma* is Truth, Knowledge and Infinity."

Hence the practice of truth is the same as service of God, the adoration of truth is equivalent to adoration of God, and the refuge taken under truth is equal to refuge under god. It is man's duty to practise truth in thought, word and deed, regarding it as his own life, and breath, and the embodiment of God Himself. The conduct, also should be made truthful. The conduct, which we describe as good, is called good deed, or good behaviour. The speech also should be truthful. Appropriate words free from violence and hypocrisy, is called truth in speech. The thought, or intent, also should be truthful. That which we describe as good intention is called goodness in thought. All the divine virtues like equanimity, contentment, peace, straightforwardness, etc., which are helpful in the realization of God, represent goodness of thought, or intent. Being helpful in the realization of God, they should be all adopted without any loss of time. Therefore, we should never abandon the path of truth, although we may be threatened with the gravest of dangers.



Look upon every man, woman, and everyone as God. You cannot help anyone; you can only serve; serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself, if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that you can help anyone of His children, blessed you are, do not think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that privilege was given to you when others had it not. Do it only as a worship. The poor and the miserable are for our salvation, so that we may serve the Lord coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper and the sinner.

—Divine Rays

Salvation is Self-Evident

—*Swami Ramsukhdas*

Generally people think that they can attain salvation by making efforts. This is not completely true. In fact salvation is self-evident and is not attained by making efforts. But people blame and oppose such a person who declares this fact. We can perform an action by having association with objects of Nature. This association leads us to bondage. Whatever action we perform, we can perform it with the help of body, senses, intellect, ego and the sense of mine. Whatever is achieved by action is perishable because every action has a beginning and an end. The fruit of an action is also perishable.

Renunciation leads to salvation. If we don't get attached to objects and actions, the evolutes of Nature, our salvation is self-evident. It is our sense of mine and egoism which leads us to bondage. We ourselves can renounce them. If we don't renounce them, even the preceptor or saints or God can't free us from them. God can't force us to renounce them, but He can free us if we exclusively depend on Him. Saintly people don't impose their views on anyone but they solve our problems, removes our doubts and give good advice to us for our welfare. Similarly God also does not enforce His views and snatch freedom from us. But if we give freedom to Him by taking refuge in Him, He will certainly help us and lead us to salvation.

Our egoistic notion and the sense of mine lead us to degradation. If we renounce them in any way, we'll attain

salvation. This is something so uncommon that I can't describe its glory. If we renounce attachment to the body totally, generally the body will not be ill. Similarly if we renounce attachment to the senses, mind, and intellect, they will be free from evils. In the same way if we renounce attachment to I'ness, it will be free from evil. The main point is that the root of evil or impurity is our attachment to them. If we renounce attachment (the sense of mine) and egoism totally, salvation will be axiomatic. We don't pay attention to this point. If we pay attention to it, we shall be able to understand it.

Now a question may arise that if all beings attain salvation, they will be free from the cycle of birth and death and thus the world will cease to exist. The reason they give for it, is that the population will decrease and finally no beings will be left behind as they will attain salvation. They hold the view that it is not a fact that beings are not reborn after attaining salvation. According to them they are not reborn upto final dissolution but they are again born at the time of new creation. According to them salvation is artificial and it is attained by efforts, so how can it be permanent? But the fact is that salvation is self-evident and natural while making efforts is unnatural. If you destroy this unnaturalness, naturalness will remain as it is. Understand the topic deeply.

You are worried about the money which you regard as yours. Are you worried about the lot of money which is in the world? No. Why? The cause of worry is not money but attachment to it. You feel happy and sad at the profit and loss of those whom you regard as yours. But you remain unaffected at the loss or profit or even death of those whom you don't regard as yours. It is only attachment or the sense of mine which leads to bondage, otherwise there is no bondage.

It is very easy to renounce attachment to people and objects etc., and we are free in it. But we remain dependent because we want to derive pleasure from them. We can't escape dependence if we indulge in pleasures that are contact-born. The Lord clearly declares—

*ye hi saṁsparśajā bhogā duḥkḥayonaya eva te |
ādyantavantah kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhaḥ ||*
(Gītā V. 22)

"The delights that are contact-born are only sources of pain, they have a beginning and an end, O son of Kuntī, no wise man delights in them."

He who does not delight in contact-born pleasures attains salvation. It is attachment to pleasures which leads to bondage. I declare time and again that even having studied sacred books, listened to discourses and lectures, I could not know the root of bondage. I could discover it after a long time that it is desire for contact-born pleasures which is the cause of bondage. Believe in it fully.



अग्निर्मूर्धा	चक्षुषी	चन्द्रसूर्यौ	
	दिशः	श्रोत्रे	वाग्विवृताश्च वेदाः ।
वायुः	प्राणो	हृदयं	विश्वमस्य
	पद्भ्यां	पृथिवी	होष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ॥

"The indwelling Self of all is surely He of whom the heaven is the head, the moon and sun are the two eyes, the directions are the two ears, the revealed *Vedas* are the speech, air is the vital force, the whole universe is the heart, and (It is He) from whose two feet emerged the earth."

—*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (II. 1. 4)

A noble undertaking should be accomplished at the earliest moment; for no reliance can be placed on the body (which may perish any moment).

—*Jayadayal Goyandka*

The Way to Eternal Peace

—Late Sri Hanumanprasad Poddar

Remember: whatever is happening in this world with regard to you, all that is taking place according to the definite plan of a merciful, loving and just God, under His own auspicious dispensation. He is gracious, hence from the mainspring of His holy dispensation ever flow the waters of bliss. In every calamity, every adversity, illness, defeat, and what more, even in death, His benevolence is complete. When you cultivate this faith, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: God is your greatest friend; He is omniscient as well as almighty. You have no well-wisher equal to or greater than He, none who knows wherein lies your true good, none who can contribute to your true happiness. When you cultivate this faith, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: misery, dissatisfaction and sin, all these are rooted in desire. The root of desire lies in attachment. And the root of attachment lies in the sense of mineness with reference to the gross body and name. Regarding yourself merely as an instrument in the hands of God, if you renounce desire, attachment, mineness and self-love, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: so long as you remain identified with, or attached to, objects, actions and fruits of actions, your mind will not be free from desire, nor can you renounce the fruits of actions. Therefore, when realizing the glory of the Lord's divine state, you renounce mineness, attachment as well as desire, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: so long as your mind continues to wander among worldly objects and keeps running away from God,

you will neither know peace, nor attain happiness. But when intensifying your spiritual practice, you succeed in exercising control over the mind, and engage it in the meditation of God, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: the practice of sin is extremely bad; but so long as man continues to regard sin as a deadly evil, he repents when he is compelled by circumstances to commit a sin, and tries to avoid sinful acts, and, finally, concluding that God alone is the saviour and supreme refuge, he calls aloud for God, the protector of the helpless, the redeemer of the fallen. For the repentant sinner, the Lord's doors ever remain open. Taking such a sinner under His own protection the Lord makes him His own, and the moment He does so, the sinner gets purified of sin, and becoming a virtuous soul, attains eternal peace. Therefore, depending wholly on God, if you also take to the practice of *Bhajana*, you will at once gain peace.

Remember: without knowledge of the truth about God, man can never cross the ocean of misery. For the attainment of this knowledge, the first indispensable requisite is faith. Faith brings exclusive devotion to spiritual practice, and exclusive devotion to practice brings control over the senses. Therefore, when you develop faith in the Divine Being, and in the fact that the knowledge of the Divine Being is attainable by a practisant and, again, in your own qualification to attain the same, you will attain that Knowledge and will at once gain peace.

Remember: exclusive surrender to God is such a glorious spiritual practice that it at once liberates man from every form of sin and distress, and makes him qualified for the attainment of supreme peace. Therefore, relinquishing dependence on all other sources of hope, all other supports, surrender yourself wholly to the Lord,—and thereby you will at once gain everlasting, eternal peace.



Spiritualisation of Education

—R. C. M. Tripathi

I would like to ask a question to the student community—particularly the college going ones. It is about why they have joined the college or the university. For what purpose or achieving what aims do they study? Secondly, I would like to ask a similar question to the curriculum makers, pedagogues and social philosophers about what aim they intended to achieve by producing lakhs of B.A.s and M.A.s in a limited number of subjects.

The students very well know that they are not going to get any job in government offices or in public sector. At least it is certain and they know it that only exceptional few will be lucky enough to get a job on merit basis. Very few of them hope that they would get a job after paying a heavy amount of bribery to some higher officer. Very recently Railway Government of India has taken a serious view of such malpractices very much prevalent and some of the officers have been removed from the services. A most welcome but almost ineffective step. Rest of them are certain of being jobless. They go to their schooling centre because they do not have any other alternative. If you ask them why they are making such a futile effort, they will say—"Well, I have never thought of that. Everybody comes so I have also joined the college. May be somehow or the other I get a job."

In most of the colleges they are not allowed to select the subject of their choice. They have to offer the required

number of subjects taught in the college. There may be several reasons behind it. Meagre resources of the parents, lack of accommodation in universities and still more in the hostels, the social indifference about the aims and norms of education etc., may be a few reasons to be counted. The teachers also do not know and have not paid any attention to why they are teaching (if at all they do the teaching work; unfortunately for the society they do not have any interest in their job) except for the reason that they draw a handsome salary in the end of the month. But the unlucky students have no stimulant like that.

बुभुक्षितैर्व्याकरणं न भुज्यते पिपासितैः काव्य रसो न पीयते is a very old saying and a very apt one. The hungry stomach cannot quench its hunger by eating grammar or a thirsty person by drinking the poetic nectar. Still better and more forceful saying is—“बुभुक्षितः किं न करोति पापं”—what sins can a hungry person not commit? Our population is reaching the number of one hundred crores. It is not possible for any government of any size to provide job for so many hands. It is foolishness to think that all so-called educated persons will be accommodated in any sector public or private. Therefore we cannot blame the government not being able to provide job for all but we will be quite justified in blaming the government to frame a wrong type of structure for educational system that cannot provide job oriented education. With the result these educational factories are producing a number of unemployed wrong-doers.

This unemployment results into criminalisation of the society. 'Empty mind is devil's workshop' so goes the saying. This type of situation makes it easy for the underworld to recruit new suitable hands for their empire. But even the underworld sector cannot accommodate so many hands. But it is certain that this way or that the unemployment factor is responsible to a very great extent

to make the youth criminal minded.

White collar mentality is another curse to the society. It evolves from the high education. These educated persons remain simply aimless wanderers. It will be vulgar to use the expression such as 'washerman's dog'. Yet their condition is more or less the same. Then snobbery develops spontaneously and that smashes their gentlemanly character. This is generally the lot of common educated persons.

During their student career they form student's unions and elect their own leaders. Sometimes they try to run their parallel administration which causes the tussle between the student community and the university administration. As the result, the educational atmosphere disappears leaving room for the student movements for this and that reason. The leaders say that they are fighting the case of students but really speaking they demand very petty things like admission of some student, library facilities, cycle-stand and lastly even for drinking water. I do not say that these demands are wrong or immoral but what really pinches me is the fact that no union has ever launched an agitation for job oriented education or even its moralisation. The student leaders feel quite puffed up when some of their demands are met by the administration.

To me, it appears that the educational system must be completely overhauled. Job-oriented system, curriculum, the text books and the method of teaching; all must be thoroughly reoriented. That must be the top priority of the society in the field of education.

It is important to satisfy the bodily hunger of every person but it is no less important rather it is more important to make a person human being. This making human being can be done only through moralisation or more correctly to say spiritualisation of the education. But this we will talk about a bit later.

Now let us thrash out the measures necessary for job oriented education as I said above that a hungry man can no longer eat Grammar. Our educationists must have a serious thought over what they intend to teach. Suppose, there is a boy from common stock and of average intelligence. He completes his graduation course in science. Can we expect him to be a Bhābhā or a Rāman? The next question is—"Is his knowledge of science helpful in anyway if he goes in business line or becomes clerk in some office?" The answer is very clear. So, the million dollar question is—Why do we teach science or any other subject in the higher course of the education to such mediocre students? Is it not that we spoil his life making him go through wrong type of education? Will it not be better to divert such students for vocational education which may create self employment?

I do not say that specialisation and higher type of education even in the human faculties of the universities should be stopped. But this type of education must be reserved for the selected genius boys and girls.

These days we hear a name in the media. It is the name of a boy from Andhra Pradesh named Vijaya Kṛṣṇa, seventeen years of age doing his graduation. The boy seems to be a better and more modern edition of a super computer so far as mathematical problems are concerned. May be it is a mistake on the part of the nature to create such talented persons from time to time but such persons are rare. It is just an example for the specialising ability. It does not mean that only such persons can be allowed for specialised education. It simply means that there must be some sort of aptitude test and some criteria should be fixed to make selection of proper persons for a suitable subject.

There are always three categories in the class—super intelligent, average and below average. In my opinion

specialisation and higher academic education must be allowed only for super intelligent students. The average class must be diverted to the vocational training. It is a pity that the number of institutions providing vocational training is very small whereas the institutions providing academic education are growing in number by leaps and bounds with the result of producing unemployed and wayward youth. The third category should be confined to manual jobs. It may look very undemocratic but the fact is the fact.

The students are a most invincible power in any society. If they are really sincere for their personal interest, the interest of the society and the interest of the country, they should launch a movement to have the country dotted with the institutes providing vocational training particularly industrial training and producing a self employed army of industrially trained youths. The strength of the universities must be minimised and only sophisticated knowledge should be their scope.

But this is not enough. I have pointed above that the nurturing of moral and spiritual character is more important than mere bread earning capability.

What we notice in India is horrible. In comparison of the other countries, particularly the developed countries our youngsters are very irresponsible—irresponsible in every sense. In their domestic life they do not feel any responsibility living the life of a parasite. God knows from where but they inculcate wrong manners. In their school life they are not only irresponsible but antisocial also. This is more so because the political leaders are most unscrupulous. For example, the BJP government in U.P. has revived the ordinance against mass copying in the examinations. God knows how far it will be successful but some of the unscrupulous leaders are criticising the decision. How

immoral it is on the part of the students, guardians and teachers that the students want to secure meritorious marks even without cultivating acquaintance with the subject. This sense of the immorality goes on strengthening and enriching. The result is that when they find the opportunity they do not hesitate in selling even the guarded secrets of the country in the international political markets.

This is due to the epicurian thinking on the part of not only our students but even the grey haired politicians who are supposed to mould and shape the future of our country. My friends, take it for granted that the missiles whether covering a short distance or intercontinental ballistic missiles are not enough to make the country rich and strong. It is the high grade character which can make any country strong and rich. The religious and spiritual sciences and practice thereof has applied a great deal of restraints on the unbridled race of materialism. The ideas of other world, hell, heaven, the theory of *Karma* and the responsibility of doership have played a majestic role in curbing the vicious tendencies of the society. The inculcation of faith in these theories or similar other theories if they are there, must be injected in the blood vessels of our youth.

Therefore the *Kalyana-Kalpataru* makes an appeal to those who are at the head of the administration to reshuffle and reorient the entire educational machinery and system with only two aims in their minds—(1) Job oriented education (2) Spiritualised education capable of building strong character.

(b) It appeals to the students to pressurise the society and governmental machinery for these two specific aims. They must compel the government and society to minimise the number of universities and enhance the number of vocational training institutes.

(c) The basic teaching principles must be harnessed to make a meaningful dent on the bourgeois and conservative mentality. It must be even transformed into industrially basic teaching.

(d) Religious education must be made compulsory. Particularly the basic religious principles helpful in smooth running of the society specially those of non communal nature must be compulsorily taught and practised. For example, for the Hindu students basic principles of *Dharma* in general, the theory of other world and the theory of *Karmayoga* must compulsorily be taught in a modified form. It means that different text books must be prescribed for the students belonging to different religions and community. Secularity does not mean being indifferent to ones own religion. It really means not interfering with the other religions. A proportionate standard of tolerance towards each other, a responsible balance and control over ones sense-organs are the real constituents of the secular personality. Every student must be motivated to follow the intelligent rules of his own society. The sense of aversion and hatred must be given up. I am sure this type of education will make a student a desirable and responsible member of the society.



There is necessity of money, no doubt, in worldly life; but do not ponder much over it and other material gains. Contentment with what comes of its own accord, is the best attitude. Do not be anxious to hoard. Those who dedicate their very life and soul to Him, those who are His devotees and have taken refuge in Him, can never think of such worldly matters. With them, expenditure is commensurate with income. As money comes into their hands in one way, it is spent in another.

—Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna

Maharṣi Rāmana's Who Am I

—S. D. Mehra

I am no one else.
But an atom of Thyself.

I am never born, nor ever die,
And that is how I defy,
Both death and birth,
On this Earth.

When the body dies,
I leave it aside,
Entering a fresh one,
And would not leave it till the end.

Again, the same story,
With another entity,
May it be a fish, a fowl or a beast,
It does not worry me in the least.

Thus, I move along,
On and on,
Till the urge,
To merge,
With Thee,
Gets the better of me;
Then, I beg and pray,
To be never never away,
And be with Thee,
Till eternity.



The Greatest Guru Dakṣiṇā

—Swami Chidanand

Radiant *Ātman!* Let us consider the question. What is the best reverence, what is the best worship, what is the best devotion, *Guru Bhakti*, and what is the best service, *Guru Sevā* that we can offer the *Guru*?

The best *Guru Bhakti* is to love all, to be kind and compassionate towards all and never hurt any living creature—to try as much as possible to benefit life around us, to be good, do good, and to serve, so that out of us only good comes, only help comes, only service comes, only usefulness comes. All that is positive, creative, constructive, auspicious, good, beautiful—that only should come to all life around us, all God's creation, through our thoughts, words and actions. Anything that is negative, anything that is destructive, harmful or injurious should never come.

Thus, there is no greater *Guru Bhakti*, there is no greater *Guru Sevā*, there is no greater worship and adoration of the *Guru* than to become embodiment of kindness, compassion and doing good to others. This is the greatest *Guru Dakṣiṇā* (gift to the *Guru*) also. This is the hallmark of discipleship.

What is the greatest worship of the *Guru*, the greatest reverence we can offer, the greatest *Bhakti* and *Sevā*? Truthfulness is the greatest *Guru Dakṣiṇā*, the greatest *Guru Bhakti*, the greatest *Guru Sevā*. This is the second great way of worshipping and adoring the *Guru*. There is no greater way.

All that contradicts truth; contradicts *Guru Bhakti*, contradicts your reverence to the *Guru*. Reverence becomes a parody, an anomaly; it turns into an empty nothingness if we do not live to uphold that which the great *Gurus* of all time stood for, that which they proclaimed. Truthfulness, therefore, in all things, integrity, therefore, in all things is the highest *Guru Bhakti*, the highest *Guru Dakṣiṇā*, the highest *Guru Sevā*.

What is the greatest *Guru Sevā*, *Guru Bhakti* and *Dakṣiṇā*? Control the self, conquer the mind and its desires and be established in concentration and inner meditation. There is no *Guru Sevā*, no *Guru Bhakti*, no *Guru Dakṣiṇā* higher than this. This is the highest way of paying reverence to the *Guru*. Be a person of self-control. To be a person of self-control, who has mastered his mind, its desires, vagaries and fantasies, to be established in self-control, overcoming the mind and successfully centring it upon God—that is the greatest *Guru Bhakti* and *Dakṣiṇā*. That is the greatest *Guru Sevā* and it is true reverence to the *Guru* who is *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Maheśvara*.

Lord Śiva has a trident. It is a weapon of destruction. He holds it and he wields it. Lord Viṣṇu has a discus. It is also a weapon of destruction. He holds it and wields it. *Brahmā* has no weapon of destruction or harm. He is an embodiment of *Ahiṃsā*, non-injury. He gives life, he creates life. He holds a *Kamaṇḍalu* in one hand, a *Japa mālā* in another, the *Veda* in another, and he gives fearlessness with the other hand.

Therefore, *Brahmā* is the creator of life and the embodiment of *Ahiṃsā*. Lord Viṣṇu is *Satyanārāyaṇa*, truthfulness, and Lord Śiva is ever self-absorbed, perfectly self-controlled, with mind and senses withdrawn and his entire interior plunged into a state of deep, deep meditation. These three—*Ahiṃsā*, *Satya*, *Brahmacarya*—constitute the

essential part of *Guru Tattva*, and to reflect that in our own personality, in our own life, character and conduct, is to shine like the full moon, absorbing the light that shines in the *Guru* in the *Guru Tattva* and embodying it in ourselves, reflecting it in all its fullness, glory and immaculate grandness and greatness.

That is discipleship. That is the greatest *Guru Sevā*; that is the greatest *Guru Bḥakti*; that is the greatest *Guru ārādhana* (worship); that is the greatest way we can pay our *Guru Dakṣiṇā*. To become an embodiment of compassion, kindness, truthfulness, perfect self-control and contemplation is the essence of discipleship. It is the essence of *Guru Bhakti* and *Sevā*.

May we contemplate these facts, these truths of our own individual personal spiritual life, and may we realise their truth and become blessed. God bless you!



It is very difficult to convince these people who are attached to the world and politics, as their minds are filled with wrong *Saṁskāras*. The fight between political and spiritual propagandists as to which is better, is going on from beginningless time. Those who work in the religious field should not enter into discussion with these people. It is only waste of time and energy. They should go on with their work with unabated vigour.

—Swami Sivananda

Thought is the basis of all Karmic formations. Thought underlies all actions. Thought is the root cause of all physical and mental developments. Thought is at the root of all diseases and afflictions. Thought is the key to all prosperities and attainments.

—Swami Jyotirmayananda

Read and Digest

—V. P. Tandon

Blind believers of God are better than non-believers.

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Exclusive devotion brings forth desired response and protection from God.

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The Lord unfolds secrets of life to the exclusive devotee to free him from bondage of life and death.

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Beyond one divinity, nothing ever was or is or will be.

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Incarnation pure assumes personal form to those who love God.

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Whosoever exists in this world is permeated by God.

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God is beheld by a devotee who possesses a pure heart.

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One who monitors others' faults also gets a share and makes no headway in the spiritual endeavour.

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He who gives up desires and is free from attachment egoism and materialism attains the supreme peace.

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God is much greater than what meets the human eye.

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God is all pervasiveness.



For Women

Chastity of Woman

Chastity is the first virtue in man or woman. Devotion to husband is only symbolic for spiritual pursuit. Husband and wife should remember that soul has no sex. Both of them should overgrow the sex-awareness. As man should earn religious merit for spiritual pursuit by devotion to parents, so does a woman earn such merit by devotion to husband. No superiority or inferiority between husband and wife should arise. An ideal conduct of husband towards wife is expressed thus. He must treat her as superior than his own life, protect her as his mother, give respect as an elder sister. The correct principle between husband and wife is that they have no conflict between them. The identity of one is lost in another. Hence the principle of equality is far inferior and inapplicable to them. The indifference, the callousness and even the cruelty of the husband need not detract her from the spiritual pursuit of a wife as she is entitled to seek her own redemption as a soul irrespective of the attitude of her husband towards her. Hence we have a galaxy of great women in our country like Arundhatī, Anasūyā, Lopāmudrā, Sāvitrī, Sukanyā and others.

Apart from its spiritual value, the chastity is an absolute necessity for an ideal social order. The pursuit of *Kāma* (pleasure) neglecting *Dharma* destroys intellect, which leads to heedlessness followed by systematic wickedness of conduct. Chastity is the life of a nation and the death

sign is unchastity. Each man should look upon all women except his wife as mother or sister or daughter. Any offence against sex must be treated an offence against nation and must be dealt with ruthlessly. Against the cruelty of the husband she can be protected by securing higher education and economic independence. Feminists should advocate worship of women by men, instead of mere equality, between them. We know in this country there was such practice of adoring the divinity as mother. *Smṛti* declared, where the women are worshipped, there Gods dwell. Further, women should develop their internal strength to protect their chastity and it is well to recall the statement of Swāmī Vivekānanda who said: "What brutality is there which purity and chastity cannot conquer?" Woman should grow in the power of her purity that there cannot be a single man, however brutal, who will not breathe an atmosphere of holiness in her presence."

The word *Naraḥ* means: Man—"nayatī sarvaṁ svavaśamiti naraḥ" (He who wants to bring everything under his control). The word *Nārī* means Woman—"nayatī svavaśaṁ puruṣaṁ iti nārī" (She who wants to bring the man under her control). Thus unless woman abides by *Dharma* and makes man adhere to *Dharma*, *Dharma* cannot be firmly established. Hence our sages said:

स्त्रीमूलः सर्वधर्मः ।

"Woman is the foundation for all righteousness".

Rāma and Sītā are the ideals of the Indian nation. Sītā is the name in India for everything that is good, pure and holy, everything that in woman we call womanly.

—The Light of Rāmāyaṇa



Sanātana Dharma—The Agenda for the third Millennium

—S. K. Balasubramanian

The concept of *Sanātana Dharma* could be made into a powerful instrument for the revitalisation of Hindu Society. It could provide a framework for the reinterpretation of Hindu concepts in modern idiom to attract back into the fold the many who feel alienated because of the abstract nature of the interpretations given by the orthodoxy.

The primary object of *Dharma* is the promotion of social evolution, with creativity as the criterion. The *Bhagavad Gītā* could provide a broad framework for the rejuvenation of the society if its teachings could be set down in modern idiom. Some excess and unwanted baggage would have to be discarded to make it totally rational in a world where opinions are shaped by empirical realities.

Otherwise the *Gītā* is rational beyond comparison. In the chapter on *Vibhūti Yoga* it identifies excellence as a divine manifestation. The chapter on *Bhakti Yoga* provides a different paradigm for faith which has to conform to God's standards and not our interpretation of what it is. The subjective element and self-serving righteousness have no place in it. The chapter on *Karma Yoga* makes it obligatory for every one including *Samnyāsīs*, to work actively for social welfare. Idleness is to be frowned upon. Perfection in work is defined as *Yoga* and *Niṣkāma Karma* is the training for perfection. Creativity is the objective of all exertions. The chapter on the *Guṇas* defines the forces that shape our reaction to external stimuli. Together with

the *Śraddhā* they define our personality. One could modify one's personality by constant training and practice. Right company is the first prerequisite for personality change. As Śaṅkara had said:

"In right company one learns objectivity, (*Sat-saṅgave Nis-saṅgatvam*)

In objectivity confusions disappear, (*Nis-saṅgave Nir-mohatvam*)

Then one acquires equanimity, (*Nir-mohatve Niś-cala-cittam*)

Wherein lies Liberation!" (*Niś-cala-chitte Jīvan-muktiḥ*)

Meditation and introspection are the means for the modification of the human personality.

Certain concepts need to be given a different orientation. Thus *Nissāṅgatva* should be translated as "objectivity", free from prejudices rather than as "detachment" which gives a distorted, impression of otherworldliness. *Gītā* defines the perfect human being in the following words: "Objective, not self-centred, and endowed with determination and enthusiasm, he remains unaffected by success and failure" (XVIII, 26). One could extend the concept and declare that "objectivity is the operative word of *Vedānta* bringing *Vedānta* within the realm of the realisable.

Another concept which has given rise to endless misunderstanding is *Māyā*. It relates to the limitations of the human perceptions and casts no doubt on the reality of the external world which is as real as any reality could be. There is also a certain distortion inherent in nature.

A comprehensive non-denominational evolutionary Hinduism should be the agenda for the next century. We should avoid the mistakes of the earlier reformers who tried to impose on Hinduism alien concepts. Thus Sikhism tried to clothe Hinduism with an Islamic garb and gave unto itself the Book, the Prophet's, central authority and

militarism. It was successful in a limited sense but could not commend itself to the majority. *Ārya Samāja* placed the *Vedas* on a high pedestal and developed a theology that rejected caste and idol worship. *Brāhmo Samāja* attempted the absurd. It tried to cast Hinduism in the Christian mould.

The most distinguishing feature of Hinduism is its emphasis on individual development. The Hindu pluralist approach is the direct result of individualism. There is no collective salvation for the Hindus, no intermediary, and no single path. Each one has to settle his equation with God who is looked upon as the benefactor *par excellence*. The three faces of the god-head represent the three aspects of human development. *Brahmā* for the procreative aspect, *Viṣṇu* for the evolutionary and *Śiva* for the sublime.

Sanātana Dharma could provide a comprehensive umbrella for Hindu rejuvenation. The *Puruṣārtha* concept could set the paradigm for social development. The *Varṇa* concept could inspire professionalism and specialisation. There is scope for detaching the hereditary element. The much misunderstood concept of Brahminical hierarchy which imposed a severe strain on the Brahmin community and demanded self sacrifice and self effacement from it, can be easily jettisoned. The Brahmins have found a new and invigorating freedom as they had to give up their traditional role and dependence on state support for their livelihood. The community has acquired a new self confidence in its independence, even as it had not given up its traditional values. Thus whatever the constraints the Brahmins and the "upper" caste Hindus faced in the recent past, they had accepted with grace and handed over power in accordance with democratic principles. Most inspiringly the Brahmins had not taken to criminality as a way of life as other groups and religious minorities had done in

a desperate search for a passage out of poverty. *Gītā's* teaching has sunk into the psyche of this community and it has accepted the harder and more durable option of excellence as the way out of the social and political morass that the society had descended into. Their example is the major reason for hope of rejuvenation of the Hindu society.

The liberation of women from the shackles of social constraints had already been achieved in a large measure in the urban areas. Its extension to the rural women discriminating between femininism and feminism would be a natural process.

The *Āśrama* concept would ensure an orderly transition from one generation to another. The elders in the *Vānaprastha* stage would have to assume a role of leadership in the emerging set up and release the younger generation for creative and productive work even as they provide compassionate guidance and salient direction. They will have to assume the priestly functions and lead in rituals. Study of Sanskrit and the *Vedas* and of the *Upaniṣads* would fall to them as well as the interpretations of these texts in modern idiom.

I would like to commend the Jewish regeneration in the past one and a half centuries as an example to be followed. The Jews were under greater religious constraints than the Hindus. Their religion restricted them to an unproductive life in the ghettos. The *Bible* had alienated them from land and agriculture leaving casuistry, commerce and criminality as the only sources of livelihood. The gentile anti-semitism was not totally baseless. The position of their women was as bad as in Islam today. The only way out of the community's rigor-mortis was also the way out of the religion.

The French revolution destroyed Christian orthodoxy and liberated the more sensible among the Jewish community

from the shackles of their past. The next century was one of consolidation for their reformist programme, which saw the end of the diaspora and the return to the holy land, with agriculture, albeit in the most unpromising area on earth, as the main plank of survival. The Kibbutz, or the agricultural co-operative, became the cornerstone of the future state of Israel though it was not particularly approved of by the orthodoxy and provided expertise and war-hardened and idealistic leadership to the new state in its infancy.

The explosive Jewish creativity in our age is not a chance phenomenon. Centuries of disciplined preparation underlie it. George Soros is not just any greedy money changer. He has the background of the community's centuries-old expertise in his blood.

Hinduism has similar chances today.



If you walk alone, and if you are a thinker, there can be nothing more beneficial to you than to begin to chant *Om* when no body is around. As you walk and chant *Om*, you will see that the very atmosphere will inspire you and in you will be evoked wonderful and marvellous thoughts.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

यदात्मतत्त्वेन	तु	ब्रह्मतत्त्वं	
	दीपोपमेनेह	युक्तः	प्रपश्येत्।
अजं	ध्रुवं	सर्वतत्त्वैर्विशुद्धं	
	ज्ञात्वा	देवं	मुच्यते सर्वपाशैः॥

"When the *Yogī* realises here the reality of *Brahman*—which is birthless, unchanging and untouched by all the categories—as the very reality of his own Self that is comparable to a lamp, then he becomes free of all bondages by knowing the deity."

—Śvetāśwatara Upaniṣad (II. 15)

God: Formful or Formless?

—*Shree Bhaisab*

God is by nature both formless and formful. The epithet 'formless' rightly means that He is not confined to any set or pet form and to that form alone: He is present in all forms alike. 'Formful' implies similar meaning: He is present in all forms. When you invoke Him in a given form, He makes His special appearance in and through it. There is no clash between the two points of view.

The Formless God:

We see a part of the sky: we cannot see the whole of it. God in His perfect form is so vast and huge that we can never see the whole of Him. In this sense, He is rightly described as formless.

All gusts of the wind are but wind while wind does not mean only gusts of these winds. All flames of fire are fire while fire does not mean only these flames. All forms are thus the forms of God, but it does not mean that God is confined to these forms alone. He exists beyond them too and is thus beyond our ken. In this sense also, He is formless.

The Formful God:

All forms are the forms of God. God in every form is out and out as powerful as the formless God. A spark or flame of fire has the same power of burning as the fire itself. Similarly, the difference in degree of divinity matters but little. If one grows the vision to see Him, one can see Him in form everywhere.

He is there in the form of His holy names.
He is there in the form of His incarnations,
in the form of their idols and pictures.
He is there in the form of the chosen ideal or the deity or
image one adores and attends on.
He is there in the form of saints and scriptures.
He is there in the forms of the exemplary exponents
of religions and righteousness.
He is there in the form of gods anywhere.
He is there in very many other forms.
He is there in each and every form.
He is there where you are glancing at:
(—only you are not recognising Him there!)

God is Both:

The idea is that God is as true with forms as without.
Worshippers of both (the Formful and the Formless)
gain similar grace at His hands: neither gets precedence
over the other: both benefit alike.

Q. Sir, I only believe in the Formless.

A. You are free to, but don't for a moment, think that
you alone are right and the others are wrong. Suppose
God is formless. He has then the power to assume a form
that other devotees want and worship.

No Idol Worship:

Q. But, Sir, certainly He is not the clay-image. One
should not worship clay.

A. But why clay? It is an image of spirit. Doesn't God
know that through it He alone is being invoked.

No idolator worships a statue or stone: one worships
God in it. You respect the photograph of your mother as you
see the form of your mother herself in it. You don't respect
the mere piece of paper and the print of ink on it.

The photo itself cannot be your mother: your mother
is not present in it. But God's image is as good as God

Himself, as God is present in everything.

There are cases when God appeared in flesh and blood from the adored idols—idols came to be living. They talked and walked with the devotee with charm and cheer. If you go through the life-stories of love-lost devotees, you will come across any number of such examples. Until 1965 (when he expired), Ronald Nixon—a university lecturer and later a renouncee came to experience this. The case of Mīrā Bāī is widely known in this context.

Please understand that you too believe in some form of His form. Otherwise, you would not bow to your scripture or place of worship either. In bowing to that you are bowing to God in that form.

Returning to the main topic, SB said:

When you believe that God is formless, you mean that He is not confined to a given form alone and that He is present in all forms. You do not mean that God is not present in the form in which others adore Him; you cannot lessen or limit Him. God is omnipresent.

When you believe that God is formful, you no doubt believe that the same God pervades the entire universe no less. In this sense, you too deem Him formless.

Thus both types of believers actually accept God in both forms. Only a broader vision, a clearer understanding is required.

God is present everywhere. He can appear in any form through loveful devotion:

A Hallucination?

Devotees see God in the form in which they had always imagined Him. They hear God speaking in their language. Doesn't it show that God is a figment of their imagination—a hallucination? Otherwise God should appear in the same form and speak in the same language to everyone everywhere.

Why, dear brother, don't you take it in the right light? God can assume all forms. He can speak all languages. It is His consideration and kindness for us that He appears before us in the form in which we recognise Him straightway and that He speaks to us in our language.

Suppose you know languages of different countries. When you go to these countries, you speak to the natives there in their language.

Now God is omniscient. He knows all languages. Is it any surprise that God should speak to people in the language they understand?

Also God is omniform. He manifests Himself before aspirants in the form they know and like.

But to rare realised souls, God reveals His Form in His own way. It is a Form in which they had never perhaps visualised Him. When asked to describe the form of God, they said it was ineffable. "Eyes had seen but could not speak: tongue can speak but has not seen!" They did not simply say that the Form they saw answered to the description given in scriptures and pictures.

The difficulty is that we do not generally recognise an attained soul, even if he be present among us. Do not, from this ignorance, please come to the conclusion that God-attained men do not exist, or that God appearing in different forms or speaking in different languages is a myth!



नोदेति नास्तमायाति सुखे दुःखे मुखप्रभा ।

यथाप्राप्तस्थितेर्यस्य जीवन्मुक्तः स उच्यते ॥

"One who does not have his face shining in the favourables nor does he have it gloomy under the adverse conditions; one who is satisfied with whatever he gets, is *Jivanmukta*."

—*Yogavāsīṣṭha*

Impact of Science on Hindu Religion (Prasādam)

—A. P. Anand

Prasādam is the left-over (ramnants) food after *Bhoga* ceremony is performed for the deity. In chapter 3, Text 14 of *Bhagavadgītā* it is clearly mentioned that we do sacrifices for demigods, (like Indra, Sun, Moon, Kālī etc.) to please them and thus ultimately Lord Kṛṣṇa is pleased. Those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious straight-a-way get benefit by offering food first to the Lord and then eat themselves. By doing so the food becomes pure and immunized to all contamination of material nature. It is the reason why we take *Prasādam* first offered to the Lord. Extravagance in the matter of eating, sleeping, defending and mating, which are demands of the body, can block advancement in the practice of *Bhakti Yoga* (transcendental loving service). As far as eating is concerned, it can be regulated only when one is used to take and accepted *Prasādam* which is a sanctified (sacred) food and ambrosid of God/deity. The Hindus take this sacred food enmasse in Community Kitchens, especially at marriages, temples, pilgrim centres and other sacred places to show oneness of the community.

It is said that Nārada Muni, a great diplomat and a saint, was the son of a maid-servant and he used to eat the ramnants of food left by the sages. By eating such left-over foods he became freed from all sinful reactions and ultimately became super-hearted like the sages. Though Nārada never went to any school of Vedic studies he, still,

due to his association with the sages acquired the highest result. The food we eat has a lot of effect on our body and mind. *Sāttvic* (pure) food has beneficial effect. If we torture and outrage an animal it will curse us and by eating it our whole body and mind will contain impurities and curses.

The *Prasādam* is thus not only sacred but pure and nutritious also. The *Prasādam* and *Caranāmṛta* (nectar of deity's feet when washed during the ritual) consist of food in many forms—cowmilk, curd, honey, fruit—dry and fresh, Ganges water, coconut, banana and holy basil (*Tulasī*).

The holy basil has very significant place in Hindu religion and its plant is widely worshipped. Basil has many healing powers and is anti-bacterial and beneficial for coughs, cold and throat irritations. It is also used in the treatment of skin diseases and ring-worms. It is good for mouth wash and stomach ailments. Eating *Tulasī* leaves in snake-bite act as an antidote. Its use stops vomiting.

Honey is useful for internal cleansing and acts as a stimulant for the brain and is useful for eyes, heart, stomach and is anti-ageing. It contains vitamins A, B and C and many chemicals and minerals like iron, copper, manganese, silica, sodium, calcium, phosphorus, sulphur and iodine. It increases hemoglobin and gives energy, thrill and freshness. It has got antiseptic properties and is used in the preparation of many *Āyurvedic* medicines.

Banana, used for *Prasādam*, is very nutritious and beneficial for gastric ulcers, constipation, piles, skin infections and psoriasis. It increases blood and gives cooling effect. Banana contains calcium, potassium, sodium, phosphorous, sulphur, magnesium, iron and vitamins.

Curd has got very cooling effect and is beneficial for digestive system.

Coconut has also got very significant place in performing rites and rituals on auspicious occasions. When raw, it gives cool effect, is very nutritious and its milk is extremely useful to jaundice affected patients. It is also offered as a sacrifice in performing *Havanas*.



The heart of the worldly man is like the worm in a dung-hill. The worm always lives in the dung and loves to live therein. If by chance someone takes it out of that filthy habitation and puts it on a lotus-flower, it will soon die of the fragrance of the flower. So the worldly man cannot live even for a moment outside the dirty atmosphere of worldly thoughts and desires.

—*Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna*

If you are attached to human happiness, you are in for a lot of trouble, because nightmares are inevitable along with the beautiful dreams. But if you will think of a dream as a dream, whether it is enjoyable or dreadful, you will have peace. When you realize that life is a dream, then you are free.

—*Self-Realization*

Faith and Love go together.

—*Sāadhanā—Spotlights by a Saint*

Do not depend upon anybody. Rely on your self. Be centred in the *Ātman* only. The wife deserts her husband when he becomes poor, and marries another young man. The rich husband divorces his wife when she loses her beauty and marries another woman. Jesus and Buddha were forsaken by all their friends, followers and disciples. This is a strange world. Mysterious is *Māyā*!

—*Swami Sivananda*

Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement

—Prof. K. L. Bhalla

According to *Bhagavān* Kṛṣṇa "The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them..... (*Śrīmad Bhāgavata*), the founder of *Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement* was Swāmī Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is a world-wide movement with centres in all parts of the world. There is one such centre at Udhampur.

Swāmījī appeared in this world a day after the celebration of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance. His followers see this as a sign of his intimate relationship with Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "I am not God, and you are not God, but we are eternal servants of God." Swāmījī's birth centennial celebrations were held in 1996.

Following in the footsteps of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu he worked to curb down the satanic tendencies of the people. He spoke out strongly against anything opposed to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. His words were razor sharp and had tremendous effect on the listeners. His supporters continue to counter atheistic opponents.

Real religion is to serve the Supreme Personality God-head. He interpreted '*Bhakti*' not just 'devotion', but as 'devotional service' to stress that devotional service is the eternal occupation of all living entities. He introduced the main process of devotional service for the present age, the chanting of the holy names of Lord. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spread the holy names in India. Swāmījī said that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

had left to the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, the job of propagating the holy names to the rest of the world. When Swāmījī first came to America, he chanted by himself in Newyork City. Later, he encouraged his disciples to chant and dance through the streets of cities all over the world.

In the words of Swāmījī—"We gave up the company of Kṛṣṇa and wanted to be happy in the material world, therefore, we are suffering. The purpose of this movement is to make people understand Kṛṣṇa as by devoting oneself to Lord one will be liberated from material bondage. Everyone of us wants to be free from illusion. If we try to understand Kṛṣṇa, His transcendental appearance then our life is successful."

Happiness can be attained when one comes to God because one is part and parcel of God. A little child is crying and no one can pacify him. But as soon as the child is put on the breast of the mother, he is at once happy because the child is part and parcel of the mother. He understands that he is safe now. In the same way we are all part and parcel of God. Unless we come to Kṛṣṇa, there is no joy.

India is considered a very backward country. But still the majority of Indians are happy. Materially by and large they are poor. But they follow the Vedic principles, bathe early in the morning, go to their business and whatever, they get, they are happy as they trust in God. The *Bhagavadgītā* tells us that if we understand Kṛṣṇa's birth and activities, we can go back to Godhead.

Swāmījī's book—"*Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead*," presents us with all the necessary information which enables us to reach this goal. The book is another presentation to help the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement in the Western World. People read many kinds of fiction to spend their time. Now this tendency can be directed to Kṛṣṇa; the result will be satisfaction of the soul, both individually and collectively.

Our aim is to adore Kṛṣṇa. The *Gopīs* did not know that

Kṛṣṇa was God. The cowherd boys did not recognise Him. Even His mother, Yaśodā, did not understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But their love was spontaneous. They did not know anything beyond Kṛṣṇa. If we come to that stage, that is perfection. That type of great soul who accepts Kṛṣṇa as everything, is very rare. Those who have taken Him as everything, are the greatest souls. They cannot be led astray.

We are like sparks of fire, sometimes the sparks look very beautiful. But if a spark falls from the fire, the fiery quality of the spark is at once extinguished. Our present condition is like that. We gave up the company of Kṛṣṇa, therefore, we are in distress. If you put the spark, the particle of carbon, back into the fire, it will again become fire. In the Kṛṣṇa 'Consciousness Cult' it is tried to pick up the sparks and put them back into fire. That return to the fire is real happiness.

Bhakti Yoga as propounded by Swāmījī is one of the greatest preaching adventures of all times. It has worked miracles, this is a movement to save humanity. For many years the preachers have gone out daily to distribute Swāmījī's books. These devotees want to give everyone a chance to learn the divine knowledge. Many persons have joined this movement because they met such devotees who presented Swāmījī's books with zeal and conviction.

We salute these messengers of God who are trying to spread the name and message of Lord. In the present day world we find everywhere chaos and confusion, misery and distress, conflict and strife. It is Lord's grace alone which can help us and to get that grace we must chant....

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare,
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.*



A Supplication

मैं हरि पतित-पावन सुने।
मैं पतित तुम पतित-पावन दोउ बानक बने॥१॥
ब्याध गनिका गज अजामिल साखि निगमनि भने।
और अधम अनेक तारे जात कापै गने॥२॥
जानि नाम अजानि लीन्हें नरक सुरपुर मने।
दासतुलसी सरन आयो, राखिये आयने॥३॥

(*Vinaya Patrikā* 160)

I am told, Thou redeem the depraved, O Hari!
I, a confirmed sinner and Thou a renowned emancipator,
Have been, by an odd coincidence, brought together.
Scriptures bear witness to Thy infinite benediction
In liberating sinners like the hunter (*Vālmīki*) and the
harlot (*Piṅgalā*)

And the defeated elephant (*Gajendra*) and the desperate
rogue (*Ajāmila*)

And countless other sinners who were bound for hell.
Those who consciously or unconsciously chanted Thy
name

Have been restrained from the hell and heaven.

Tulasī, a slave, seeks Thy ever-sustaining shelter

Pray, bestow Thy grace and accept him as Thy own.

—Free rendering by R. P. Dwivedi



Śaraṇāgati

—C. N. Parthasarathy

Though the concept of *Śaraṇāgati* or surrender (unto Him) is associated with Gajendra and Draupadī and is considered as a means to escape from the ordeals of life, for a *Sādhaka* it is central to his very existence. Surrender unto Him (शरणागति) is not a means merely to get out of difficulties but an awareness that it is Lord's will that always prevails irrespective of the circumstances in which the *Sādhaka* is placed. Good or bad, difficult period or convenient situations are due to His will and His grace. It is this awareness which is central to the concept of surrender. When this understanding dawns one resigns oneself to any circumstance as Lord's will. It is not a helpless reaction but a willing submission to His dictates with full knowledge that He as the Master guides and dictates everything and every situation. In such a situation the *Sādhaka* develops equanimity as preached by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavadgītā* when He said सुख दुःखे समेकत्वा It is not a helpless outcry before Lord but a willing acknowledgement of 'I am nothing you are everything.' Every thought and deed is His merely manifestation through human action and man is only *Nimitta* as proclaimed by Lord. This understanding destroys *Ahaṁkāra* (अहंकार) for it makes one feel that he is doing or enjoying (अहंकार विमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते) as Lord said. Man grieves due to such an understanding. 'I did it' 'I failed' this attitude makes one unhappy. While he feels that he has succeeded (by doing it himself). He forgets Him even while calling himself a believer.

Therefore it is very necessary to cultivate this idea (भाव) of surrender by reminding ourselves always that everything is happening according to His will. Even in the best of circumstances one must be able to see the translation of His will into fruition. Such a feeling saves one from a feeling of guilt, agony or fear and helps to lead a life of equanimity. That will be the real understanding of *Gītā Vākya*. (मामेकं शरणं ब्रज). To a *Sādhaka* there is no moment of unhappiness "सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी" because when everything is under His control (who we believe as the Supreme Master) and happening according to His Will. What is there for one to be unhappy?

What an easy and beautiful way of freeing ourselves from this world of stress and strain which is due to our owning actions and believing we are the doers.

Kṛṣṇārpanamastu



Why do you say that the dreamland is unreal? Because when you are awake it is not there. Then so does not this very definition of unreality apply to the wakeful state? When in the dreamland or deep sleep state, the wakeful world exists no longer.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

If for even ten minutes a day you were to talk deeply with God, to the exclusion of any other thought except Him, you would see a tremendous change in your life. There is no doubt about it; I have practised these teachings of *Guruji's* and know that they work. If you pray to Him with all your mind, He does respond."

—Self-Realization

The destruction of ego releases infinite power.

—*Sādhana*—Spotlights by a Saint

Līlās of My Little Lord

—K. V. Krishnamachari

There are two aspects in the mental state of any individual. One is 'Body Consciousness' and the second is 'God Consciousness'. History of great godmen tells us that they have all shed their body consciousness which centres round the 'Self' and developed God Consciousness which takes them easily towards God and near God, because in the absence of 'Body Consciousness' one becomes free from the qualities like pride, self conceit, ego etc., which are big hurdles in the path of attaining emancipation.

The one easiest method to shed 'Body Consciousness' and get into 'God Consciousness' is to read, hear and get merged in the thought of the *Līlās* of the Lord.

This method is followed by many a *Bhakta* and we will see below how they think, imagine, express and enjoy the *Līlās* of the Lord. A few such nice, interesting, exhilarating and thought provoking exploits of Śrī Kṛṣṇa during his childhood and boyhood alone are given here. In support of the above-said idea let me quote what *Līlā Śuka* says in his *Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛtam* in unequivocal terms.

उपासतामात्मविदः पुराणाः परं पुमांसं निहितं गुहायां ।

वयं यशोदाशिशु बाललीला कथासुधा सिन्धुषु लीलयामः ॥

"Let ancient seers seek the Lord hidden in the caves of the heart, but we shall delight ourselves in the rapturous tales of the offspring of Yaśodā! The implication is that the path of *Bhakti* is far more easy than the path of *Jñāna*.

A true God lover finds delight in mere recounting of the deeds of his Deity.

Analysis of the Ślokas (verses)—

The first 14 verses, are in connection with the *Līlās* of baby Kṛṣṇa, child Kṛṣṇa and boy Kṛṣṇa. They cover and convey certain interesting points as—(1) the astute nature (2) the precocious nature (3) the capacity to give ready retorts (4) perspicacity (5) the subtle way of exhibiting his superhuman nature. These are brought out by the poet *Bhakta* in a most exquisite manner.

To put the above points in plain words:

Baby Kṛṣṇa exhibits his strength and Superhuman powers, while yet being looked upon as a human child of Vraja. Sometimes he makes one feel he is very intelligent. In some actions we will feel that he thinks much ahead of times. At some time we feel his extraordinary wisdom far beyond his age. Certain incidents will make one feel he is *Nārāyaṇa* Himself in the guise of a Cowherd boy. Sometimes he makes us feel that he is conscious of his original status and that he is the Lord of the Universe being in his cosmic bed of Ananta in the milky ocean.

One will feel from his behaviour and action that his *Bhaktas* are very dear to him and that he is prepared to go to the extent of correcting the erring people, guiding them properly to make that understand that he is none other than the Supreme Lord so that they can reach the final stage and attain *Mokṣa*.

The simple analysis is given so that elders who happen to go through the *Ślokas* (verses) might give the younger ones the proper meaning and purpose of the Lord's *Līlās*. The young and impressionable mind will certainly receive the information with interest and enthusiasm and the *Līlās* of the little Lord will become indelible in their minds. This will last long and be of great use at a later stage to get

into God-consciousness.

Ślokas 15 to 19 are mostly for elderly people to peruse, understand and appreciate the philosophy contained in them.

The Last verse, though simple and small yet most effective, shows the easy way to reach the Universal Lord.

1

During the deluge, the Lord of the Universe alone exists, while all the three worlds, including mountains are immersed in water. Then it is described that the Lord, taking the form of a baby, lies on a banyan leaf, floating on the vast expanse of water, for how long, no one knows.

Wonder-wonder-wonder.

The Lord of Universe, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa who came to the earth as Kṛṣṇa alone can do this. None else.

करारविन्देनपदारविन्दं मुखारविन्दे विनिवेशयन्तम्।
वटस्य पत्रस्य पुटे शयानं बालं मुकुन्दं मनसा स्मरामि॥

2

Then out of His own will (*Saṅkalpa*) He is born as the eighth child of Devakī and Vasudeva.

Veda Vyāsa describes the birth of the Supreme at midnight in the month of Śrāvaṇa (*Simha*) as follows:

तमद्भुतं बालकमम्बुजेक्षणं चतुर्भुजं शङ्खगदाद्युदायुधम्।
श्रीवत्सलक्ष्मं गलशोभिकौस्तुभं पीताम्बरं सान्द्रपयोदसौभगम्॥
महार्हवैदूर्यकिरीटकुण्डल त्विषापरिष्वक्तसहस्रकुन्तलम्।
उद्दामकाञ्च्यङ्गद कङ्कणादिभिः विरोचमानं वसुदेव ऐक्षत॥

"Vasudeva saw that wonderful son, lotus eyed, four armed, with the uplifted missiles, the conch, the mace and the rest; having the mark of Śrīvatsa, with the ruby *Kaustubha* shining at his neck, in yellow garment and beautiful like the laden cloud, with His thick locks clasped by the radiance of the ear rings and crown set with precious stones and resplendent with a big girdle, armlets, wristlets and other ornaments.

(My little Lord exhibits His original form to Devakī and Vasudeva)

Wonder-wonder-wonder.

3

Having been born in the family of *Kṣatriyas* in Mathura, he is brought up as a *Yādava* in the midst of cowherd boys, cows and calves in Gokulam. As a child of a few weeks he is lying in a cradle. One *Pūtānā*, a *Rākṣasī* comes to Gokulam in the form of an attractive *Gopī* with poison-painted breasts to give a suckle to Kṛṣṇa and kill him. But child Kṛṣṇa suckles not the milk but her very life. She is left dead in her true form.

तस्मिंस्तनंदुर्जरवीर्यमुल्बणं ददौ.....प्राणैस्समं रोषसमन्वितोऽपिबत्।

To die at the hands of Kṛṣṇa is not that easy. So we must know the antecedents of that lucky *Rākṣasī*. The Lord of the universe took the form of a dwarf during one of His previous incarnations, known as *Vāmana*. The divine dwarf entered the big sacrificial hall where Mahā Bali was performing a great sacrifice. In the audience there was seated a young and beautiful lady. She was Ratnamālā the daughter of Mahābali Cakravartī. She saw Vamana and was attracted by his charming appearance and thought, "If only, I should have a child of this beauty how lucky would I be to suckle the child."

The divine *Vāmana* understood the mind of Ratnamālā and said within himself, "My lady, you will have the chance, not in this birth, but at a later date in one of my *Avatāras*."

This Ratnamālā was born as *Pūtānā* and had the twin good fortunes of both suckling baby Kṛṣṇa and also dying at His hands.

4

One day Yaśodā went out leaving child Kṛṣṇa in the house. Kṛṣṇa observes this. He looks up, he sees a pot full of fresh butter suspended in a rope-container, a little

above the floor level.

Somehow he manages to reach the pot. He enjoys himself with a full course of butter. Just then he hears the foot steps of his mother coming in. At once he moves to a corner, lies down quietly closing his eyes as if he is in deep sleep.

Yaśodā sees things clearly and feeling proud of her precocious child takes him and fondles him.

We see clearly how Kṛṣṇa behaves like an ordinary child of Brindavan.

5

Child Kṛṣṇa, is now able to walk, though tottering. One can see him walking and falling entering some *Gopī's* house and so on.

To every *Gopī* Kṛṣṇa is the Cynosure of her eyes. Kṛṣṇa is the darling of every *Gopī*. Every *Gopī* thinks that any other *Gopī* has no right over baby Kṛṣṇa and that she alone has the right. One day Kṛṣṇa is seen by a *Gopī* with his hand in a butter pot in her house. She at once without making noise bolts the door of her house outside, goes to Yaśodā's mansion straight to complain against baby Kṛṣṇa. The *Gopī* enters the mansion in haste. There she sees; to her utter consternation, Kṛṣṇa bound and tied to a mortar. The *Gopī* becomes benumbed and mouth gagged. She returns in great disappointment.

अन्तर्गृहे कृष्णमवेक्ष्य चौरं बदध्वा कवाटं जननीं गतैका ।

उलूखले दामनिबद्धमेनं तत्रापिदृष्ट्वास्तमिताबभूव ॥

The *Gopī* thought she had only to bring Yaśodā to the house, open the door and hand over the thief to her. When she saw Kṛṣṇa there in Yaśodā's house tied to a mortar, her complaint died on her lips. The inner meaning is Kṛṣṇa is everywhere. He thus gives his *Bhaktas* chance to understand he is superhuman. But how many have understood this?

Again the hidden meanings in stealing butter is very

simple. The Lord secretly steals the heart of His *Bhaktas*.

Ācārya Vedānta Deśika describes this scene in his inimitable way in *Gopāla Viṃśati*.

आविर्भवत्वनिभृताभरणं परस्तात् आकुञ्चितैकचरणं निभृतान्यपादम् ।
दध्निमन्थमुखरेण निबद्धतालं नाथस्यनन्दभवने नवनीत नाद्यम् ॥

"The sound made by the jewels worn by Kṛṣṇa provides a nice tune.

The sound produced by the churning rod contributes a nice rhythm.

Kṛṣṇa stands only on one foot while the other foot is raised and bent.

In such a posture he begins to dance requesting Yaśodā to give him some butter."

But Yaśodā goes into the kitchen to attend to some urgent work. Kṛṣṇa gets perturbed and he strikes the pot making a hole in it. He takes as much butter as he wants while the butter, curds etc., flow out of the pot. He then hides himself in some corner of a room.

Yaśodā comes out only to see the curd, butter and everything flowing on the floor. It is Kṛṣṇa's mischief. I am not able to control him, thinking so she stood still for a minute, and says to herself, "Yes, that is the best way." After a search she brings him out from a room. She goes in and comes out with a long rope. She binds him round his belly, takes the other end to a mortar and tries to tie the other end to it. She finds the rope just two inches short. She brings a piece, attaches it to the rope and tries to bind it to the mortar. Again she finds it two inches short. She patiently repeats this exercise several times. Unfortunately the rope remains always two inches short. She gets tired and sits down exhausted in disgust and despair with her dishevelled hair.

Kṛṣṇa observes this—

Kṛṣṇa takes pity on His mother and allows himself to

be bound. Kṛṣṇa capable of freeing others from their bondage, gets himself bound. What does this mean?

दृष्ट्वापरिश्रमं कृष्णः कृपयाऽऽसीत्स्वबन्धने

The Lord gets himself bound so that
He can free others from bondage.

7

Heaving a sigh of relief, Yaśodā begins attending to her work.

उलूखलेबद्धमुदारशौर्यं उत्तुङ्गयुग्मार्जुनभङ्गलीलं ।
उत्फुल्लपद्मायतचारुनेत्रं बालंमुकुन्दं मनसास्मरामि ॥

In the meanwhile child Kṛṣṇa slowly but steadily moves on dragging the mortar behind. He moves on, on all fours, gets out of the house. There, on the way are two Arjuna trees grown side by side. Child Kṛṣṇa moves, in between the trees and pushes forward with force, when the two trees fall down with a terrible noise, two celestial beings emanate from the trees and go up in the air paying their obeisance to child Kṛṣṇa.

मातः किं यदुनाथ देहि चषकं किं तेन पातुं पयः ।
तन्नास्त्यद्य कदास्तिवा निशि निशा कावान्धकारोदये ॥
आमील्याक्षियुगं निशाप्युपगता देहीति मातुर्मुहुः ।
वक्षोजांशुककर्षणोद्यतकरःकृष्णस्यपुष्पातु नः ॥

Kṛṣṇa; Mother!

Yaśodā: Yes, prince of Yadus, what is it?

Kṛṣṇa: Give me a cup.

Yaśodā: What for?

Kṛṣṇa: For drinking milk.

Yaśodā: There is no milk just now.

Kṛṣṇa: When will there be?

Yaśodā: In the night.

Kṛṣṇa: What is night, mother?

Yaśodā: The setting in of darkness.

Kṛṣṇa: (Closing his eyes) Mother, night has come,
give me milk.

Yaśodā wonders at the precocious nature of her son, hugs him close smelling the scent of his hair.

Another day Balarāma informs Yaśodā "Mother, Kṛṣṇa is eating mud". She runs to the spot, brings Kṛṣṇa dragging Him, gives a few blows on his back.

Yaśodā: Why did you eat mud?

Kṛṣṇa: Mother, Why should I eat mud? You give me cheese, butter etc., in plenty. Really I did not eat mud.

She again gives him a slap. This happens to be a bit severe.

Kṛṣṇa: Mother, I have not eaten mud, please, please don't beat me.

Who told you so, mother, please tell me.

Yaśodā: Balarāma just now informed me.

Kṛṣṇa: Mother, please do not believe brother's word's, he is jealous of me, he does not like me.

So he tells such cock and bull story about me.

Yaśodā: No. He will not tell a lie.

Kṛṣṇa: Then, you please look into my mouth and satisfy yourself.

Yaśodā: That is nice, open your mouth, let me find out.

Kṛṣṇa, like an obedient child opens his little pretty mouth for his mother's inspection. Yaśodā looks into his mouth, stands flabbergasted, but yet sees the earth and heaven, mountains and rivers, the sun, the moon and the stars in that little mouth. Next moment she understands that her Kṛṣṇa is no ordinary child but really superhuman.

She hugs him close and kisses him. When the Lord comes down to the earth, he does behave like a man and he allows himself to be bound and beaten.

At the same time he reminds Yaśodā of his real entity off and on.

साद्रिद्वीपाब्धिभूगोलं सवाय्वग्नीन्दुतारकम्।

Kṛṣṇa wantonly creates this situation for two reasons. One to make Yaśodā understand he is not an ordinary child

and secondly he wants to be fair to Yaśodā, his foster mother. We must remember he showed his cosmic form to Devakī at birth. Yaśodā should not be deprived of that privilege.

10

To lull Kṛṣṇa to sleep, Yaśodā one day begins telling Rāma's story to him.

There lived a certain person named Rāma.

Hum (this sound comes from Kṛṣṇa)

His wife was called Sītā.

Hum.

At the bidding of Rāma's father Daśaratha, they two were roaming in the forest.

Hum'

At that time a *Rākṣasa* by name Rāvaṇa carried away Sītā.

At the mention of the name Rāvaṇa, Kṛṣṇa cried loudly,

'Saumitri (Lakṣmaṇa)

"My bow, my bow, my bow, where is it"

Yaśodā at once wisely appeased him by saying 'My child it is just a story—don't worry, sleep.'

रामोनाम बभूव हुं तदबला सीतेति हुं तौ पितु।

वाचा पञ्चवटीतटे विहरतस्तामाहरद्रावणः ॥

निद्रार्थजननी कथामिति हरेर्हुङ्कारतः शृण्वतः ।

सौमित्रेकधनुर्धनुर्धनुरिति व्यग्रागिरः पातु नः ॥

The child forgets himself and carries his memory backward to *Rāma Avatāra*, he was a silent listener all the while, but at Rāvaṇa's incident, he could not contain himself and shouts to Lakṣmaṇa. Evidently, he gets himself transported to his divine abode in the ocean of milk.

Here and there he brings out his super human nature also.

(To be continued)



Rādhā Rānī

—Bankey Behari

Bhakti (Devotion) is the birthright of everyone of us. But it entails sacrifice—mighty sacrifices, to begin with, first of ego, of decorum and all that the world holds sacred and considers valuable. But one who knows life's goal is 'Realization of Self', i.e., meeting the Divine Pair, hesitates not to enter the field. For it does not behove man, when he can aspire for and win the Highest—the Lord Himself—to crave for baser ideals and waste the boon of human life for them. Unlike the *Advaitī's* ideal, to the *Bhakta* there is no end. He does not say 'Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ, Śāntiḥ'. Rather even after the Meeting, he always cries *Aśāntiḥ! Aśāntiḥ! Aśāntiḥ!* for intense yearning is the food Love feeds on and bewildered looks the dress it dons. Its ideal is not *Jaḍa Samādhī*, but *Caitanya Samādhī*, where every moment he lives with the Lord and even an instant's disappearance makes him mad. This is the love Rādhā depicts by Her life—absorbed in thoughts of the Lord she ever lives; not for a moment does His sweet face leave her eyes, or else she would fall dead at the moment. Very difficult it is to portray this Love, still more to express the Gospel of Love. For Love is not of this world, and all instruments coined by *Māyā* are incapable of catching the lover's heart-beat and whisperings, the Beloved's glances, the yearning of their hearts, the parting and meeting emotions of the two and the ultimate melting away of the dual Form into the One—the acme of Love.

Unless the very Lord incarnates Himself to play the role of the Lover and woo His Beloved on the earth, all pen-pictures fall short of capturing the rhythmic divine melody that plays in the hearts of the two.

What passes for Love in this world, howsoever noble in sentiment and entailing howsoever great a sacrifice of worldly attachments and desires, is after all of this world and never has the gross been transmuted into the subtle and all efforts have failed to catch the fire of the sighs and tears; nor has the artist found the tongue to express the tale of the woe of the separated soul. And unless that happens—a miracle of miracles—all efforts to paint Love turn futile. Why tear and sigh are chosen as the solitary modes of expressing what love-pangs pass betwixt the lover and the beloved, only the Lovers can tell!

The difference between the Love Divine and the love of the worldlings is the difference between the sigh and tear of Lailā and Majnūn, and the appearance and disappearance of Kṛṣṇa in the Dalliance Scenes—the *Rāsa Līlā* of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. The one is lost in time faintly reminiscent on the canvas of memory, dead and gone—painful memory. Lovers, however, say they lived and loved and console themselves praising it 'as a love that did not belong to this world'. The other is the holy, sacred, eternal Fire, the life-giving emotion, a thrill that keeps alive all creation, is the throb of the Life of the Universe. For creation, would cease if this love ceased, if the *Rāsa-Līlā* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa came to a close. *Pralaya* will mark that moment when on the last curtain of the Dalliance scenes will appear the words—Finis.



The Self-Revealed Vedas

—B. N. Bhargava

The *Vedas* are self-revealed. In other words, they are not the creation of any human being. They have been guiding the whole universe by their divine light from the times immemorial.

Right at the time of the creation of this world God created the *Vedas* spontaneously like the inhaling and exhaling of breath. *Maharṣi Yājñavalkya* says in '*Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*'—

"The *Ṛg Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sāma Veda* and the *Atharva Veda* are the breath of the Supreme Spirit."

In other words 'The *Ṛg*', 'The *Yajur*', 'The *Sāma*' and 'The *Atharva Vedas* were breathed out by the Eternal Almighty Creator of this World. Goswāmī Tulasīdāsa also says in the *Rāmacaritamānasa*:

"It was a great fun that *Hari* (Supreme Spirit) out of whose breath *Vedas* came into existence, was going to School."

Except the *Vedas*, all other scriptures are creations of some human beings. The *Vedas* alone are divine; they are not the output of any human being. Some branches of the *Vedas* like '*Kaṭha-Śākhā*' etc., derived their names after the *Ṛṣis* who were the seers of the '*Mantras*' (verses) of the *Vedas* and became the early pioneers of such Vedic branches. "The *Ṛṣis* were the seers of *Mantras*",—in this manner the term '*Ṛṣi*' has been interpreted. At the outset of the creation of the world, therefore, various branches

of the '*Vedas*' were named after those '*Ṛṣis*', who were made a vehicle by the Immortal and Almighty God to reveal the Vedic *Mantras*. To every Vedic *Mantra*, thus, is attached the name of a *Ṛṣi* who was its seer or visualizer. According to the ancient canons of the orthodox sect of Hinduism (i.e., *Sanātana Dharma*), it is essential to know the name of the seer of a *Mantra*, the name of its metre and its proper relation, otherwise any ritual performed by the use of a *Mantra* will not be correct and fruitful.

As the *Vedas* belong to the immemorial past and are divine creations, nobody, therefore, could wipe out any letter, word or sentence from them. Still on account of the long passage of time, they split into various divisions and sects. *Maharṣi Vedavyāsa* says in the '*Sūta Saṁhitā*' that—

'The *Ṛg Veda* has '21' branches, the *Yajur Veda* has '101' branches, the *Atharva Veda* has '9' branches and the *Sāma Veda* has '1000' branches.'

As India was ruled by the Muslims and the English for many centuries, so all the branches of *Vedas* are not available nowadays. Still according to details mentioned in the sacred books and treatises, there are one lakh '*Mantras*' in all the four *Vedas*. Out of these '80' thousand *Mantras* deal with rituals and other religious performances', '16' thousand deal with various kinds of worship, and '4' thousand *Mantras* are about the realization or knowledge of God.

The children of the three castes viz., the *Brāhmaṇa*, the *Kṣatriya* and the *Vaiśya*, become duty-bound to perform the rituals and the worships, as ordained in the '*Vedas*' from the day their '*Upanayana*' ceremony (or Baptism) is performed. In order to remind them constantly about this, a sacred thread called *Yajñopavīta* having a length of '96' '*Cauhas*' is made to hung from their shoulders. This is done with the aim that they may always

feel duty-bound to perform the rituals and worships as described in the '96' thousand '*Mantras*' (verses) of *Vedas*. In the sacred thread or '*Yajñopavīta*' three threads are bound together which signify that we owe three kinds of debts viz., a debt to the gods, a debt to the parents and forefathers and a debt to the *Rṣis* or sages of the past. Only after paying off these three debts by performing these rituals and worships according to *Vedas*, one can become worthy of '*Mokṣa*' which means Self-realization and freedom from the bondage of rebirths and deaths. It is said—

"After paying off the three debts, concentrate your mind on the attainment of '*Mokṣa*' (freedom from the cycle of rebirths and deaths)".

If Vedic rituals and worships are performed correctly and selflessly, it will result in "*Vairāgya*" which is a state of mind free from all desires and enchantments of worldly things. The day this "*Vairāgya*" is complete, one should adopt the path of Renunciation or '*Samnyāsa*'—

"The moment your '*Vairāgya*' is complete, adopt the path of '*Samnyāsa*' (Renunciation)".

After taking to the path of renunciation one should acquire knowledge as specified in the last four thousand '*Mantras*' of the '*Vedas*'. This last part of *Vedas* is popularly known as the *Vedānta*. For the study of '*Vedānta*' the most worthy or fit person is that who having given up all desires for worldly riches, worldly family and fame and name, has adopted the path of renunciation and lives on alms only. But in the absence of such a renounced way of life, a virtuous householder, a hermit, a celibate or a self-restrained person can also listen to or study the '*Vedānta*' and their listening to or study of the *Vedānta* will not be futile.

These days some people ironically remark or tauntingly

say to those who listen to the *Vedānta*, "When you do not practise it, what is the use of listening to it?" I want to remind you that in the verses of our *Vedas*, very great advantage of listening to the *Vedānta* has been mentioned. It has been stated that—

"By listening to the *Vedānta* daily alongwith devotedly serving the *Guru* (preceptor) one gets fruits equal to that which one gets by observing '80' *Kṛcchra Cāndrāyaṇa*, fasts."

A *Cāndrāyaṇa* fast is that wherein the diet that one takes is controlled systematically. It is increased and decreased according to the changes in the lighted portion of the moon. According to its prescribed rules, on the New-Moon day one should take only one morsel of that food material which consists of barley and other such products which are used as an offering in the sacrificial fire. On the second day of the Moon, one should take only two such morsels. In this way the number of such morsels should be increased with the increase in the lighted portion of the moon upto the Full Moon-day when fifteen such morsels be taken. After this, from the next day he should decrease the number of such morsels till he takes nothing and observes a complete fast on the No-Moon day. This observance of control in diet from the New-Moon day to the No-Moon day is equal to one '*Cāndrāyaṇa*' fast. The '*Kṛcchra-Cāndrāyaṇa*', fast is still more difficult than this. In the '*Kṛcchra-Cāndrāyaṇa*' fast, barley etc., is served as a food to a cow and then from the cow-dung the barley grain is collected washed and dried and then ground and taken as a food. In this fast also the diet is increased and decreased with respect to the changes in the lighted portion of the Moon as it is done in a '*Cāndrāyaṇa*' fast. The fruit equal to that of eighty such '*Kṛcchra-Cāndrāyaṇa*' fast is obtained by one who devotedly listens to the *Vedānta*.

and serves the preceptor with devotion. In addition to this the chief fruit of listening to the *Vedānta* is the realization of the true nature of one's own Self. If the *Vedānta* is listened to attentively in this manner, it will certainly result in a process of listening, reflecting and meditating and ultimately in leading to Self-realization. This means that listening to the *Vedānta* is never futile or ineffectual. One, therefore, should never be disturbed by the ironical remarks of the critics.



What a prejudice has overtaken the heart of man! They say "I have hard cash. This is real, this gross, solid-seeming world." O fool, the only hard reality is your Self—Unchangeable. Eternal is your Self, that is the only hard thing. The rest is all a trick of the senses.

—Swami Rama Tirtha

Learn the art of meditation on the Self. You may practise meditation on various objects according to your capacity and inclination. Practice of meditation fills your unconscious with harmonious vibrations.

—Swami Jyotirmayananda

May true discrimination and light dawn on those people who have ignored the spiritual side of life altogether, who are thinking too much of body and its comforts, who have forgotten all about their essential divine nature, who are running after the shadow and who have disregarded the priceless jewel of the *Ātman* that is hidden in their hearts!

—Swami Sivananda

There is no knowledge like the knowledge relating to God.

—Jayadayal Goyandka

Character of an Avadhūta

—Dr. P. P. Sharma

The authorship of the *Avadhūta Gītā* is ascribed to Dattātreya, Datta, son of Atri (married to Anasūyā). The word *Avadhūta* means one who has become a liberated soul in consequence of shedding or casting away all worldly ties and attachments. Dattātreya, himself a renunciant of this order, is held not only in high esteem but treated on par with God. He is worshipped as an incarnation of Divinity. It would, therefore, be worthwhile to examine the character of an *Avadhūta* as it emerges from this spiritual work.

The word *Avadhūta* is an acronym, that is, a word formed from the first (or first few) letters of several words. This is made clear in chapter VIII where the significance of 'A', 'Va', 'Dhū', and 'Ta', is brought out in four verses.

आशापाशविनिर्मुक्त

आदिमध्यान्तनिर्मलः ।

आनन्दे वर्तते नित्यमकारं तस्य लक्षणम् ॥

(*Avadhūta Gītā* VIII. 6)

The *Avadhūta* is free from the fetters of hopes, is totally pure, in the beginning, middle and end, and abides continuously in joy. This is the significance of 'A'. The second letter 'Va' refers to his having conquered all desires, to his healthy and wholesome speech, and to his concern with the present.

वासना वर्जिता येन वक्तव्यं च निरामयम् ।

वर्तमानेषु वर्तते वकारं तस्य लक्षणम् ॥

(VIII. 7)

The third letter 'Dhū' indicates that he is careless about or indifferent to his physical appearance. But his heart is

clean and blemishless. He is free from—does not practise—concentration and meditation.

धूलिधूसरगात्राणि धूतचित्तोनिरामयः ।
धारणाध्याननिर्मुक्तो धूकारस्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥

(VIII. 8)

The last 'Ta' sums up what may be regarded as the most striking tract of an *Avadhūta*—

तत्त्वचिन्ता धृता येन चिन्ताचेष्टाविवर्जितः ।
तमोऽहंकार निर्मुक्तस्तकारस्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥

(VIII. 9)

By him is borne steadily the concern for truth. He is rid of all thoughts and efforts. He has gone beyond ignorance and egoism.

The *Avadhūta* is not run-of the mill type of spiritual aspirant or *Sādhaka*. He is marked by some uncommon, even strange, characteristics:

शून्यागारे समरसपूत
स्तिष्ठन्नेकः सुखमवधूतः ।
चरति हि नग्नस्त्यक्त्वा गर्वं
विन्दति केवलमात्मनि सर्वम् ॥

(I. 73)

In an empty abode dwells happily the *Avadhūta* all by himself, pure and balanced. Having renounced his pride, he moves about naked. Within himself he obtains everything. The *Avadhūta* has reached that stage of enlightenment where man-made distinctions of virtue and vice are obliterated, where physical accessories like one's dress and house lose all significance.

रथ्याकर्पटविरचितकन्धः
पुण्यापुण्यविवर्जितपन्थः ।
शून्यागारे तिष्ठति नग्नः
शुद्धनिरञ्जनसमरसमग्नः ॥

(VII. 1)

Nude or clad in a patched garment made of rags picked

up from the street he goes along the path which is devoid of virtue and vice and dwells in a deserted place, immersed in the pure, taintless homogeneous state.

What is styled as *Advaita* (non-dualism) is not merely a doctrine or dogma of the *Avadhūta*; it is the very breath of his life. Any verse picked up at random from the text more specially from chapter 1 will reveal a sense of complete identity between himself and Ultimate Reality. That being the case, whom shall he adore or worship? "कस्याप्यहो नमस्कुर्यामहमेकोनिरञ्जनः" to whom shall I make obeisance, I who am one and taintless? Meditation which is so much extolled in religious texts (Ch. VI, for instance, of the *Bhagavadgīta*, called *Ātmasamīyama Yoga*, is devoted to meditation) is dismissed as an expression of ignorance because it is founded on duality.

आत्मानं सततं विद्धि सर्वत्रैकं निरन्तरम्।
अहं ध्याता परं ध्येयमखण्डं खण्ड्यते कथम्॥

(I. 12)

Know the Self to be omnipresent, single and constant. I am the meditator, the supreme goal of meditation. How do you split the indivisible? The teacher exhorts his pupil to realise that he is the unchangeable one, equally preceived in all—"समं हि सर्वेषु विमृष्टमव्ययम्" (I. 11).

न जातो न मृतोऽसि त्वं न ते देहः कदाचन।
सर्वं ब्रह्मेति विख्यातं ब्रवीति बहुधा श्रुतिः॥

(I. 13)

You are not born nor do you die. Never do you have a body. The *Vedas* proclaim in many different ways the well-known sentence." All is *Brahman*."

Having realized that he is completely at one with the Supreme or the infinite. The *Avadhūta* no longer bothers about the various items of the traditional agenda of religion.

वेदा न लोका न सुरा न यज्ञा वर्णाश्रमो नैव कुलं न जातिः ।
न धूममार्गो न च दीप्तिमार्गो ब्रह्मैकरूपं परमार्थतत्त्वम् ॥

(I. 34)

There are no *Vedas*, no worlds, no gods, no sacrifices. There is neither cast nor stage (*Āśrama*) in life, no family, no birth. There is neither the path of smoke nor the path of light. The highest truth is the unchanging *Brahman*. One will be hard-put to reconciling such a sweeping denial of several articles of faith affirmed in the *Gītā* and elsewhere. The two paths of smoke and light are referred to in Ch. VIII of the *Gītā*. Similarly Kṛṣṇa declares 'चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टम्', the four *Varnas* have been created by Me. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa addressing Arjuna says—

यत्करोषि यदश्रासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

(IX. 27)

The *Avadhūta* who is an extreme non-dualist states his position in sharp contrast to the teaching of the *Gītā*—

यत्करोमि यदश्रामि यज्जुहोमि ददामि यत् ।
एतत्सर्वं न मे किञ्चिद्विशुद्धोऽहमहमव्ययः ॥

(I. 47)

What I do, what I eat, what I sacrifice, what I offer—all this is not mine in the least. I am pure, unborn and ever intact. Since the *Avadhūta* is so thoroughly imbued with *Brahman*, feels so completely integrated into it, he sets little store by the guideline of the path as he has already reached the goal towards which others are yet struggling and striving.

For the *Avadhūta*, *Puruṣa* (the Ultimate Reality) and *Prakṛti* (the material world) are non-different. Therefore he does not turn his back on the latter; rather he participates in the life on the relative plane (like Janaka did):

प्रमादेन न सन्देहः किं करिष्यसि वृत्तिमान् ।
उत्पद्यन्ते विलीयन्ते बुद्बुदाश्च यथा जले ॥

(II. 7)

He admits that his mind is subject to modification in response to the various experiences of worldly life, ignorance however, will not create any doubt. These modifications will arise and dissolve like bubbles in water. Since he has realized his divine identity, while living in the work-a-day world he may, on superficial view, appear to be enveloped in ignorance, but he is constantly in touch with his real innate nature, his divinity. To him all antinomies, dualities, contradictions, like profit and loss, heat and cold, birth and death, friend and foe are alike.

Living each moment of his life in unbroken communion with *Brahman*, this *Sādhaka* at the pinnacle of the highest Self-realization does not have to invoke the Lord when the last hour strikes. His passage from the mortal plane to Divinity is absolutely effortless—"घटे भिन्ने घटाकाशं सुलीनं भेदवर्जितम्" (I. 31). When the pot is broken, the space within it is absorbed in the infinite space and becomes undifferentiated.

Indeed, the *Avadhūta* is something of a non-conformist who cares precious little for traditional assumptions and beliefs. In the fire of his own independent and uninitiated soul he has fashioned and forged his values and convictions. From an apparently trivial matter like his going around naked or skimpily covered with tatters to his stridently declaring—

स्थूलं हि नो नहि कृशं न गतागतं हि
आद्यन्तमध्यरहितं न परापरं हि।
सत्यं वदामि खलु वै परमार्थतत्त्वं
ज्ञानामृतं समरसं गगनोपमोज्ज्वलम्॥

(III. 6)

The self is neither gross nor subtle. It has neither come nor gone. It is without beginning, middle, and end. It is neither high nor low. I am truly declaring the highest truth and reality—I am the nectar of knowledge, homogeneous

existence, like the sky, the *Avadhūta* may be a riddle or an enigma to a common man of the world. He may even appear to be a queer person, and odd man out. He lives in the world but essentially he is far away. blissfully dwelling in his Self-realization. What does he care for the six-limbed *Yoga* or the instructions of the teacher (I. 48), for knowledge, reasoning, or attainment of *Samādhi* (I. 58), for the *Vedas*, initiation, tonsure, ritualistic worship (II. 32), for such exercises as closing of nostril, for gazing, or posture (II. 35), for offering prayers at fixed hours 'सन्ध्यादिकं कर्म', (IV. 18), when he has fully realized what he is "ज्ञानामृतं समरसं गगनोपमोऽहम्", the nectar of knowledge, homogeneous knowledge, like the sky, "स्वरूपनिर्वाणमनामयोऽहम्", I am free from disease, my form has been extinguished.

The *Avadhūta* treads the earth as the rest of us do but his sights are directed elsewhere. Although he does not consider himself different from anybody or anything he is actually an alien who has descended on this planet, our terra-firma, from another sphere.



Purify your vision, so that you (1) look upon another woman as your own mother; (2) look upon another's wealth as (a clod) earth and stone; and (3) look upon every being as your own self.

—Divine Rays

प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते।

अप्रमत्तेन वेद्धव्यं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत्॥

"Om is the bow; the soul is the arrow; and *Brahman* is called its target. It is to be hit by an unerring man. One should become one with It just like an arrow."

—*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (II. 2. 4)

Dear scholarly contributor,

Every year as you know we used to circulate a list of topics for our special issue. But this year it was not so.

We received several suggestions from our readers and some of the research students, who were in need of an authentic translation of **Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa**. It was a big venture and time too was short yet we decided to go for it.

Since it is a voluminous work and we could provide only pages 384 for the special number; hence we did not approach you for any article to be published in the special number.

Now we want your co-operation in the form of articles on and in regard of **Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa** to be published in the monthly issues of **Kalyana-Kalpataru** in ones and twos. The topics may be such as given below—

- (1) The age of Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (2) About the author and authorship
- (3) Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa and Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (4) The name—Why Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (5) The spiritualism in Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (6) Is Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa a treatise on Vedānta
- (7) Does Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa teach Bhaktiyoga
- (8) Karmayoga in Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (9) Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa an allegory in history or history in allegory
- (10) Symbolism in Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (11) The importance of Rāmahr̥daya

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- (12) The importance of Rāma Gītā
- (13) The influence of Kṛṣṇakathā on Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (14) Bhāgavata and Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (15) Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (16) How much does Tulasī owe to Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa
- (17) The necessity of compiling Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa and the like.

The scholarly contributors are free to make out a topic of their own choice concerning Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa. The articles may be short and clearly typed or in ligible handwriting. They must be thought provoking and if possible research oriented.

We will be highly obliged to our learned contributors if they co-operate as usual.

The articles should reach this office as early as possible.

Many, many thanks to you all.

Yours sincerely
Keshoram Aggarwal
The Editor
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